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CHOCOLATE AND ROMANCE ARE THE FOCUS OF GLENDALE'S SWEETEST FESTIVAL FEBRUARY 8-10

GLENDALÉ, Ariz. –The weekend before Valentine's Day, Feb. 8-10, is a delicious delight for the senses as the Glendale Chocolate Affaire takes over downtown Glendale to create a chocolate-lover's dream!

Chocolate purveyors from Arizona and around the nation gather in Glendale for this award-winning festival, which celebrates not only chocolate, but romance and the arts as well. Chocolate confections will include classic delicacies like chocolate-covered strawberries as well as unique treats such as sweet potato fries with a chocolate topping, Mediterranean chocolate vinaigrette salad, sea salt coconut and chocolate fry bread, goat milk fudge, cinnamon and white chocolate kettle corn and a new staple at the event, chocolate-covered bacon.

The Chocolate Affaire is sponsored by Arizona's famous candy makers, Cerreta's. The candy factory will offer tours all weekend, so visitors can get a behind-the-scenes look at how the chocolatiers create everyone's favorite candy. Free shuttles from the Civic Center (5750 W. Glenn Dr.) will take attendees to the candy factory.

In addition, the festival has become the largest gathering of national romance novelists in the Southwest. This symposium of literary romantics offers fans the opportunity to get up close and personal with authors, as well as the chance to attend free writing workshops given by the experts.

Families with children will enjoy myriad activities, including hands-on arts and crafts, face-painting and a rock-climbing wall. Horse-drawn carriage rides will be available throughout the weekend to take couples or families on a scenic, charming ride through the historic Catlin Court district.

Chocolate Affaire

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Another exciting element to the festival will be an interactive presentation of The Science of Chocolate, by Midwestern University's Dr. Stacy Haber, as part of the AZ SciTech Festival, which runs throughout the Valley at different events and venues during the month of February. The Glendale Chocolate Affaire is one of about ten events happening in Glendale and the West Valley.

The arts component to the festival is the 4th annual Chocolate Affaire Plein Air Competition. The Glendale Public Arts Program will coordinate an on-site competition that will take place on Saturday, Feb. 9. Plein air paintings are created outdoors, from real life; both painter and subject must be outdoors and photographs cannot be used. Cash prizes will be awarded, and winners will be purchased for the city's permanent collection. For artist and registration information, visit www.glendaleaz.com/arts.

Finally, for those discerning palates determined to find the most delicious or unique chocolate item at the event, head to the festival on Friday evening for the "Sweet Tooth" competition, in which chocolatiers submit their confections to be evaluated by a distinguished panel of judges. The 1st place winner will receive special signage to display at its booth for winning in the "Sweet Tooth" contest.

Event hours are Friday 5 - 10 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday noon to 5 p.m. The event is located in the heart of Historic Downtown Glendale, in Murphy Park, located at 58th and Glendale avenues.

The Glendale Chocolate Affaire is sponsored by Cerreta Candy Company, ABC 15, The Arizona Republic, Valley Buick-GMC Dealers, Monster, , APS, the Phoenix Coyotes, Glendale Public Arts Program, Camelback Ranch-Glendale, KMLE, KOOL and JAMZ.

For more information on the Glendale Chocolate Affaire, including the entertainment lineup and a list of authors making appearances, visit our website at www.glendaleaz.com/events or call the special events hotline at 623-930-2299.

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